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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 001113

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [OVIP](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [IZ](#) [KU](#)
SUBJECT: KUWAIT'S AMBASSADOR TO IRAQ SEEKS LIMITED USG
SUPPORT THROUGH DECEMBER

REF: A. A) KUWAIT 991
[B. B\) KUWAIT 1007](#)

Classified By: Political Counselor Peter O'Donohue for reasons 1.4 b and d

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Kuwait's Ambassador to Iraq, Ali Al-Mou'min, presented his credentials in Baghdad on October 22 and took initial steps to establish his Mission there. He is now back in Kuwait, preparing a return visit to Baghdad on November 16, for which he seeks USG Milair and limited security support. Al-Mou'min understands that the USG's capacity to support his Mission is limited, and he is hoping that his Mission will be sufficiently well-established by the end of December to handle its own arrangements. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) During a November 3 discussion with POLCOUNS, Ali Al-Mou'min, Kuwait's new Ambassador to Baghdad, expressed appreciation for U.S. milair support in transporting him to Baghdad for his October 22 presentation of credentials and for Embassy Baghdad's facilitation of his security arrangements during that visit. Al-Mou'min expressed continuing concerns about the security situation in Iraq and, in that vein, hoped the USG would continue to provide Milair and limited security assistance through December, by which point he felt his Mission in Baghdad would be sufficiently well-established to handle its own arrangements. Al-Mou'min said he next plans to travel to Baghdad on November 16. He expects to be accompanied on that visit by two drivers, a security detail, and a representative of the Amir, who will make a one day visit to Baghdad to deliver an invitation to President Talabani to attend a Kuwait-hosted economic conference in January. Al-Mou'min expressed the hope that Embassy Baghdad could facilitate travel of the group from the airport to the International Zone via helicopter.

[1](#)3. (C) POLCOUNS reiterated to Al-Mou'min the legal and material constraints to continued USG support for his Mission in Baghdad, noting in particular that Milair support would have to be limited in duration, reimbursable, and on a space available basis. While underscoring the USG desire to support the restoration of Kuwait-Iraq relations, POLCOUNS urged Al-Mou'min to examine other transport options, including charter or use of a GOK-owned aircraft. Al-Mou'min said he had already looked into the possibility of using one of two local charter operations (Gryphon or Skyline) and would also raise with the UN the possibility of obtaining transport on one of its flights into Baghdad, but he was quite clear that he viewed these as less desirable options. For security concerns, he said he preferred the Milair option and archly noted that this was not too much to ask of an ally to whom the GOK had extended so much support for many years and "friends shouldn't let friends down".

[1](#)4. (C) Ambassador Al-Mou'min told POLCOUNS that his October visit to Baghdad had exceeded his expectations. He was

clearly pleased at having been received by the Iraqi President, Vice President, Foreign Minister, Prime Minister and Speaker, all of whom warmly welcomed him as Kuwait's new Ambassador. Al-Mou'min told POLCOUNS that he had avoided raising difficult bilateral issues on debt and borders during his initial visit, preferring to use the occasion as an opportunity to "hear the Iraqi point of view" and establish good working relationships. Al-Mou'min also said that he felt satisfied with progress achieved during his October visit towards establishing a Kuwaiti presence in Baghdad. At present, Kuwait has offices in the Rasheed Hotel inside the International Zone but hopes to move into a rented villa in the International Zone, on a temporary basis, within the next two months. Al-Mou'min now has a staff comprised of two officers, drivers from the Kuwaiti armed forces, and a security detail from the Kuwaiti national police; he has requested the GOK provide his Mission with a communicator. Al-Mou'min reiterated his concerns about security in Baghdad, noting that he and other guests did not feel entirely safe inside the Rasheed Hotel even with a Kuwaiti security detail present.

15. (C) Al-Mou'min told POLCOUNS that he expects to rotate between Baghdad and Kuwait for the foreseeable future. He said he anticipates retaining his role as the head of Kuwait's Humanitarian Operations Center (an MFA-dependent entity) for the foreseeable future but, when POLCOUNS noted that the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations may restrict his capacity to perform dual functions, Al-Mou'min said MFA's legal department would examine his options.

16. (C) Comment: Ambassador Al-Mou'min clearly understands

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that the USG is limited in what can do for him as he establishes his Mission in Baghdad but, understandably, he is pushing the envelope. At present he seems to have accepted that USG support is finite, but would be grateful for continued Milair and security support through December.

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